

NAVY HISTORY CENTER  
CAPTAIN ELMER L. CAVENY  
MEDICAL CORPS, U. S. NAVY

Elmer Leonard Caveny was born in Kings Mountain, North Carolina, on May 26, 1907, son of Lebanus Hugh and Lydia Sarratt Caveny. He attended Emory University College of Medicine, in Atlanta, Georgia, and was graduated with the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1930. Appointed Assistant Surgeon with the rank of Lieutenant (jg) in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Navy on June 3, 1930, he subsequently attained the rank of Captain, to date from March 20, 1945.

After being commissioned in June 1930, he served his period of internship at the Naval Hospital, Norfolk, Virginia, and in June 1931 reported to the Mine Depot, Yorktown, Virginia, as Station Medical Officer. He was detached in May 1933, upon completion of his tour of duty there, and following an assignment with the U. S. Army in connection with Civilian Conservation Corps was ordered to the Asiatic Station. There he served from May 1935 to March 1936 as a Medical Officer at the Naval Hospital, Canacao, Philippine Islands. He then served as Medical Officer aboard the USS AUGUSTA in China waters until October 1937.

He was assigned to Neuropsychiatry Service at the Naval Hospital, Philadelphia, from November 1937 to July 1940, and for nine months thereafter was Medical Officer of Special Service Squadron, Panama, Canal Zone. In April 1941 he reported to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, and, completing the five months' course, was designated Flight Surgeon in September of that year. He then joined Patrol Wing TWO at Pearl Harbor, T. H., and served as Medical Officer during the early period of World War II, until July 1943.

He received a Letter of Commendation with Ribbon from the Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, for "distinguished service during the attack on the U. S. Fleet in Pearl Harbor, T. H., by Japanese forces on December 7, 1941, when by your commendable actions, you assisted most ably in the face of enemy bombing and strafing in caring for the many wounded men from the Naval Air Station and nearby disabled ships..."

Detached from Patrol Wing TWO in July 1943, Dr. Caveny returned to the United States, and for three months had duty at the Naval Hospital, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In November of that year he reported to Commander Fleet Air, West Coast, and after duty for four months as Medical Officer on the Staff, he returned to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, for a tour of duty as an instructor. Detached in September 1947, he was a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School until April 1948, when he was designated Chief, Neuropsychiatry Service, at the Naval Hospital, Philadelphia.

Transferring to the Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland, in September 1951, he served as Chief of Neuropsychiatry Service there, until June 1953. Since that time he has been Head of the Neuropsychiatry Branch, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

In addition to the Commendation Ribbon, Captain Caveny has the China Service Medal (1937); the American Defense Service Medal, Base Clasp; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; the American Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; and the National Defense Service Medal.